

AZ LINKS NEWSLETTER

www.azlinks.gov



Welcome

By Jutta Ulrich

AZ Links has grown this year. There are now six regional partnerships, encompassing all 15 counties. Options Counseling, a new grant-funded activity has been initiated, and Care Transitions continues in its third year. We are also in the midst of an evaluation process, and we are beginning to develop a marketing plan.

With all of this exciting news, a newsletter seemed like a good idea. This can be a forum for updates from the regional partnerships and also a way for DAAS to share information. We are planning a newsletter every two months, and we want to include your articles, announcements, photos and calendar items. See page 5 for information on submitting material.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the new year.

Jutta

DIRECT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENCE

Submitted by Jenny Goeckel

DIRECT Center for Independence, Inc. is currently offering "Living Well with a Disability", a 10-week health promotion workshop for adults with disabilities, created by the University of Montana Rural Institute on Disability.

Participants develop confidence while creating small goals, which lead them to achieve their larger goals in time. They learn how to have healthy reactions, communicate more effectively

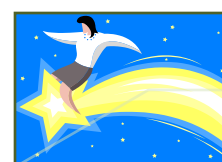
INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Welcome	1
Direct Center for Independence	1
AZ Links Northern Arizona	2
Options Counseling (OC)	2
Administration on Aging vision of OC	3
Congratulations to Area Agency on Aging, Region One Inc.	4
News and Announcements	4 & 5
Save the Date and Nominate	4
Newsletter Submissions	5

and problem solve when things don't go as planned; they develop strategies for eating well and incorporating physical activity into their daily schedule, and where to go for reliable information and how to advocate for themselves and others with disabilities. Finally, they created a plan for keeping their new skills after the workshop is over. Participants gain confidence and empower themselves to be less isolated and think positively.

"Living Well with a Disability" teaches a person to develop healthy lifestyle habits that can help them reach their goals and even prevent secondary health conditions. Workshop topics include: Goal Setting, Problem Solving, Healthy Reactions, Beating the Blues, Healthy Communication, Seeking Information, Eating Well, Physical Activity, Advocacy, and Maintenance.

"Living Well with a Disability" workshops will be offered in Tucson in 2012, so if you are interested in learning new ways to live well, call Jenny Goeckel, Peer Counselor at (520) 624-6452 to sign up today!



AZ Links Northern Arizona

Submitted by Kurtis Kegley, NACOG Area Agency on Aging, Region III

The Northern Arizona regional AZ Links partnership began in September of 2010 with a three-day training and planning event in Prescott Valley. The [Area Agency on Aging, Region III](#) is taking the lead to grow the partnership and regional activities. The Area Agency on Aging assists the public through its Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Their programs include State Health Insurance Program (SHIP), Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Ombudsman, and Information and Referral Services.

Early in 2011, the Area Agency on Aging Region III was the fifth agency in the state to establish Care Transitions, designed to assist individuals'

transition from the hospital to the home. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Summit Regional Medical Center was signed. The program provides Case Management and discharge information for Medicare beneficiaries to reduce readmissions to the hospital within 30 days of discharge. Region III is also developing an internal resource database to better serve the needs of individuals in Northern Arizona.

[New Horizons Center for Independent Living](#) is an AZ Links partner and resource center for Yavapai, Navajo, and Apache Counties. They are also providing client transportation for the Prescott and Cottonwood areas.

Options Counseling

Submitted by Jutta Ulrich

In 2009, AZ Links partners formed a committee to create the Online Options Counselor, available on www.azlinks.gov. In 2010, the Division of Aging and Adult Services received a grant award for ADRC Options Counseling (OC) from the Administration on Aging (AoA) to establish in-person OC, based on statewide service standards. Throughout the two-year grant period, all OC grantee states participate in national discussions with AoA for the purpose of creating national standards for OC.

A workgroup with statewide participation from AZ Links partners created draft standards for the provision of OC. Pilot agencies include the Area Agency on Aging, Region One, Inc., and the Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (ABIL) in Maricopa County, and the Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) and DIRECT Center for Independent Living



(Pictured left to right) Liz Toone (New Horizons) Mary Beals-Luedtka (AAA), Barbara Kelsey (AHCCCS), and Joe Goitia (DDD)

in Pima County. Area Agency Region One developed draft tools for intake and the extended home visit that is conducted; the other pilot sites are adopting these, making small changes as needed for their populations but collecting the same data. An independent evaluator, Aha! Inc., will conduct an evaluation of OC activities and outcomes.

Over the next year, we look forward to program updates from the pilot sites. By the end of the grant period in September 2012, we hope to have a toolkit for organizations that may want to add OC to their palette of services, along with evaluation results and feedback from the pilot sites.

Administration on Aging vision of OC (from the national draft standards):

The primary goal of Options Counseling (OC) is to support informed decision-making about Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS). It represents a critical service of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) as they help provide a clear pathway for individuals to access LTSS. Some individuals may only need information about LTSS, but many need options counseling for the following reasons:

- A tremendous amount of information about LTSS is available on-line, but it can be complex, contradictory, and confusing;
- Individuals and families may want or need additional support interpreting information and weighing the pros and cons of their different decisions about LTSS;
- Few people plan ahead for long term supports; and
- Institutional placements often occur without consideration of available community-based options.

AoA views Options Counseling as both a philosophy underpinning how ADRCs interact with individuals, as well as a process that ADRC staff will follow to support individuals and families to consider their options and access the right services and supports at the right time. Options Counseling should:

- Be available to anyone contacting the ADRC network;
- Be person-centered and directed by the individual;
- Support people of all income levels to make informed decisions;
- Be delivered in a timely and/or expedited manner when appropriate;
- Serve as a comprehensive and streamlined process by which people learn about and are connected to immediate and on-going support as needed or requested;
- Be the service that brings the larger aging and disability networks closer together; and
- Be valued by a large set of potential funders and stakeholders.

Congratulations to Area Agency on Aging, Region One Inc.

In November, CMS announced the first site selections for the Community Based Care Transitions Program. Among the seven grantees is the Area Agency on Aging, Region One, serving Maricopa County in Arizona, in partnership with John C. Lincoln North Mountain Hospital, West Valley Hospital, Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn Medical Center, John C. Lincoln Deer Valley Hospital; APIPA, a Medicaid Acute Care Plan that serves dually-enrolled Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries; and Sunwest Pharmacy. Please join us in congratulating Region One on being one of the first CMS Care Transitions grantees in the country, and the only one in the entire western half of the United States. For more information, see the project description on the [CMS](#) website.

AZ Links Committee Meetings

Please mark your calendar for two meetings for partners to discuss progress and exchange best practices. We will also discuss the need for additional planning sessions and meetings with other organizations (e.g. veterans, state libraries, community action agencies).

Statewide Partners Meetings

- Wednesday, March 14, 2012, from 10 am to 12 noon
- Wednesday, September 12, 2012, from 10 am to 12 noon

Save the Date and Nominate!

Promoting Active Lifestyles for People with Disabilities

Community Forum and Resource Fair

An opportunity to develop a policy agenda to address wellness issues for all ages and disabilities.

When? Saturday, February 18, 2012, 9am-2pm
Where? Ellie Towne Recreation Center, Tucson
Who? Up to 200 individuals, nominated by you, who are interested in health and community advocacy.

Agenda: A half day program, including didactic presentation and small group work
 plus
 A healthy lunch
Plus

An **Active Living Resource Fair** highlighting opportunities for physical activity for people with disabilities (open to the public, 10-3)

- Learn about how the physical environment can promote or discourage healthy eating and active living.
- Identify personal barriers that make it difficult to choose a healthy lifestyle.
- Identify community barriers to healthy eating and active living for people of all ages and disabilities.
- Learn about existing resources for healthy eating and active living that are appropriate for people with disabilities.

Outcome: Based on what participants say, we will develop a "white paper" on policy changes needed to support healthy lifestyles for people with disabilities. This will be used to advocate for community and environmental changes in Pima County and the cities within Pima County.

Call for nominations will go out in early January.

Submitted by DIRECT Center for Independence

News and Announcements

Source: ADRC Technical Assistance Exchange
Newsletter, November 30, 2011

[Partnering Physicians with Community Organizations](#) is a toolkit developed by the National Council on Aging Center for Healthy Aging and the Merck Institute of Aging & Health designed to help physicians collaborate with community-based organizations that serve older adults. It also includes many suggestions and tools useful to organizations collaborating with physicians, including tips on working with physicians, a referral form template, and a sample survey.

The National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) created [Basic Training for Aging I&R/A Professionals](#), a free, four module, online training course aimed at Information and Referral/ Assistance (I&R/A) professionals. Use of the video tutorials, written materials, narrated PowerPoints, and online quizzes will help prepare I&R/A professionals to obtain a CIRS-A certification. The trainings are part of the National Information & Referral Support Center, a special project supported by the Administration on Aging.

UNH Institute on Disability's ["Look Back, Plan Forward"](#) is an example of a website that gives people with disabilities and older adults a place to record and reflect on important life events.

Newsletter Submissions

Dear AZ Link Partners,

I'm Cynthia Chavez here in the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), and I will be collecting information for our AZ Links Newsletter. We plan on an electronic newsletter every 2 or 3 months, and would like your input on current events, news, trainings, and any other updates about ADRC, AZ Links and connected activities.

Please send any news or updates, special projects, activities, calendar pages, any photos or brief notices that you may want to include in the newsletter to CynthiaChavez@azdes.gov.

Next newsletter: February 2012

Deadline for submissions: January 17, 2012

I look forward to hearing from you all!

Thank you,

Cynthia

Cynthia Chavez

NACOG Area Agency on Aging
http://nacog.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=dep_intro&dept_id=7
New Horizon Center for Independent Living
<http://www.newhorizonsilc.org/>
AZ Links
www.azlinks.gov
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
<http://www.cms.gov/DemoProjectsEvalRpts/MD/itemdetail.asp?itemID=CMS1239313>
Basic Training for Aging I&R/A Professionals
<http://nasuad.mrooms3.net/>
Look Back, Plan Forward
<http://www.lookbackplanforward.com/>